



# RESTRUCTURING OF CITIES - A REVIEW

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## ABSTRACT

Cities are growing very fast in every aspect whether related to Social, physical and Economic. So they need to be designed carefully taking every aspect hand in hand. In this article I have portrayed one of the tools of urban Conversation in which one can restructure a city for better functioning for the people as - "Cities are for people". Basically, Restructuring is a plan to strengthen the existing built structure of a city. In this article I have quoted two examples- Haussmann's City 'Paris' and Mughal Capital City 'Delhi', which are similar to each other and follow same basic elements of planning. Both have undergone restructuring focusing on elements such as street pattern, urban picture, creating center business districts, conserving heritage, embedding current architectural style in important buildings. But while planning a new city for the people planners generally do not consider the existing structure of the city which is often completely razed off during new construction as in the case of Paris while in the case of Delhi the new city ignored the already existing pattern of old Delhi because of which there is no integration between New and Old Delhi. To avoid this situation the one must focus not only on new structuring but should also incorporate the existing pattern. The New and old City must be stitched in a manner so that different user group get better opportunities to showcase their skills and the planning must be flexible enough so that future generation can easily indulge into the design.

**KEYWORDS:** Restructuring, Planning, Connections, Social Gap, Communities interdependence.

## 1. INTRODUCTION:

Restructuring is a plan to strengthen the existing built environment, or to recombine. It involves relocation of businesses centers, the demolition of structures, relocation of people, and change of land use, which is done for the overall welfare of society. It is just another tool of urban conservation, we cannot pick one thread of a city as all of them are inter connected. Restructuring - can be done by bringing physical, social, economic changes in the society for improvement in quality of life. The impact of restructuring can both be good or bad. It is applied, when the city faces challenges in form of social, physical, economic challenges comprising of public place issues, mobility issue, funding issues etc. It is done by reinforcing urban design elements and Trancik theories of Figure Ground, Linkage, and Place into the cities structure for the better functioning of city and its people.

There are examples of Paris and Delhi in which restructuring was done. In ear-

lier days, urban forms of both the Cities were similar in respect to an adjacent flowing river and both were a walled city, but in today's scenario Paris is a more developed city than Delhi. Like Paris, City Delhi has also created radial layout of streets for better functioning of transport system; it has also created a concept of serial vision in Delhi, which was developed by Edwin Lutyen's in New Delhi.

## 2. CASE EXAMPLE OF PARIS:

As a Restructuring Example I have quoted an example of Haussmann's City Paris which influenced the history of upcoming cities. The layout of Paris was influenced by geometric grid pattern embedded with boulevard, vistas, and avenues as shown in figure. Before the development of Paris "Every street in a medieval town, even the bridges, was a market street." As said by Haussmann. It lacked public facilities and suffered from unplanned narrow streets, open sewage system, poor city scape, increasingly growing population, which resulted in barricades and breeding grounds for diseases.



Source: Digital Globe/Rex

**Figure 1: Development of Paris along the River**



Source: Art History Archive

**Figure 2: Modern Paris by Haussmann's**

Haussmann restructured the city in every aspect like: improving social infrastructure, emphasize on physical infrastructure, and creating lung spaces. He created public buildings like Palais Garnier which reflected neo classical architecture. He created new avenue edge with trees opened to a view to the Panthéon. The overall urban picture of that period was quite eclectic and styles were chosen to suit the function of each building: the churches are neo-Gothic, neo-Romanesque, Neo-Byzantine, while the civilian buildings neo-Renaissance or neoclassical. He made the street section so functionally good that every building including monuments fitted well in that screen. Every building of Haussmann follows typical characteristics of building floor going five to seven floors up with projected balcony with a Haussmann style cut stone serving many user groups

under a same roof with shops in the ground floor catering to economy of the city. He also revitalizes the heritage buildings which were of great cultural significance to the city. The urban layout of Paris streets were quite interesting, he divided city into 12 districts connecting with wide boulevards which improved the cityscape. He worked on nodes of the city and created a piazza over it so that one may get a pause over that point. These boulevards cut the buildings into elongated rectangles and triangles. Haussmann's also emphasized on embedded underground water and sewage system for the new upcoming city. He brought techniques from industrialization such as iron piping separating drinking water and waste pipe, which helped the people of Paris to be disease free. (Guardian News and Media Limited)

So, he not only gave Paris a new look but also focused on the needs of the city for the present to present and the future generations so that it could help City to rise day by day.

### 3. CASE EXAMPLE OF DELHI:

In Indian context, I have taken an example of Metropolitan city of New Delhi which is a case similar like Paris. It was designed by Edwin Lutyens. The design was inspired by New York and Paris. The urban layout of streets radiate from central vistas and cross at right angles, 30° or 60° to the main axis forming a triangle and hexagonal node from which all streets were emerging out. The major pathways were made extremely broad avenues to cater large amount of vehicle and have the potential to increase their carriage way. The streets were lined by the great boulevards along with tree lines for a better urban picture of the city.

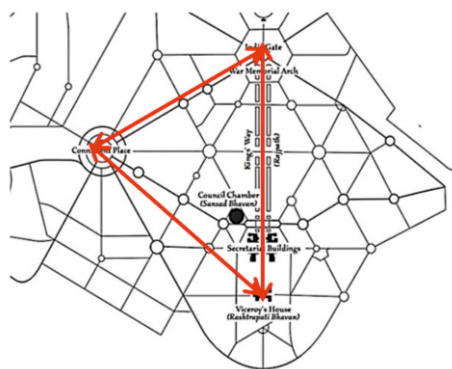


Figure 3: Lutyen's planning connecting the three important cores of New Delhi

Lutyens Delhi was planned as a very spacious garden city of that area. Landscape of that area was designed in a way such that trees, hedges and round about helped to cut the dust storm which was frequent in the area and could portray it as a similar in plan to Paris. Moreover, Lutyen's wanted to include all historical and natural features of the area in his plans for better living of the people.

The zoning of the area was done keeping in mind the important heritage buildings of the place i.e. the Government Complex was placed in the center of the region surrounded by Bungalow House on both the sides, which were for High income Group, the commercial district was placed on one side forming the G+1 typology. The Central region which comprise of Government Complexes, Lutyen's laid the Rashtrapati Bhawan on the top of the Raised Hill so that the king could have a view of the city. Three important building were connected by great Royal Avenue from Rashtrapati Bhawan to India Gate which is now known as Raj Path as shown in Figure. (Agarwal, 2013)

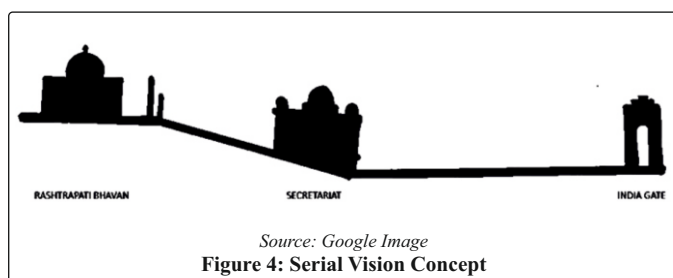


Figure 4: Serial Vision Concept

Edwin was inspired by Baroque style, the architecture of the area including Rashtrapati Bhawan, Secretariat building and the Commercial center have similar features with Thick Bands, Jalis, Buddhist dome, broad Chajjas, Broad Columns which was created by Edwin for Delhi and is known as the 'Delhi Order'. (Slideshare, 2017) The Serial Vision technique by Gordon Cullen was used by Lutyen's to design the Raj Path. It uses the terrain of the area to locate the most important building to stand on the top, and gradually look down to a great avenue facing the other important buildings that were lined by trees so as to improve the urban Landscape of that place. So, Overall Lutyens design of the city which was overall inspired from different elements.

### 4. ANALYSIS:

The above cases tell us about the gap between the new and the old interventions. Firstly, the new intervention of Paris accommodated only High Income group and Middle Income group people because of which poor people were totally neglected which gave rise to gentrification, which arose due to restructuring, while in Delhi the new planned city totally ignored the old city pattern which created a gap between the two areas - one perfectly planned and the other with irregular pattern.

Secondly, planning of New Delhi gave rise to 28% surge in population spilling from the walled city Delhi from inside to Paharganj which gave rise to many

health related problems while in Paris the planner did not construct housing for low income group people which gave rise to shortage of housing because of which people called him "Artist of Destruction". All low income group people were forced to move in suburbs of the city which lacked all basic amenities so; the artist not only created a Modern Paris but hand in hand also created a city which was far worse than the earlier Paris. This has created a social gap between the high group of communities and the low income group people.

Thirdly in case of Paris many small trade businesses were closed as everyone wanted to shift to the core area which was well planned and aesthetically appealing with beautiful cornices and corbels. Because of which life of the common people became miserable, and left them jobless. While in case of Delhi many tradesperson had to move towards suburbs of the city or neighboring villages for better opportunities. Fourthly, in both the cities the planners totally ignored the ongoing medieval character of the city modernizing the cities according to their influence of art and architecture style which was influenced by Washington and London.

The planners totally transformed the place unknowingly the fact that it has created a huge social gap between the communities. In the master plan we can see the difference between the built fabric of old and the new transformation. One part of the city is total inorganic settlement and the other part is well planned in a grid pattern which was developed by the British, to segregate from common people to maintain their superior status. This ideology is still continuing to this era because of which most of the planners and designers unknowingly are making situation worse for future. There are examples where visionary leaders made efforts to stitch together the two communities under one roof, but due to socio economic and political reasons the efforts could not be successful.

Cities are dynamic, they keep changing depending how they are transformed by the different user groups, Delhi is a city which has undergone many changes through different emperor, and reflects many type of architecture, culture and tradition so is suited example for restructuring. In the figure we can clearly identify the difference between the Old and New Delhi. The following points will be helpful for restructuring the old existing city with the new fabric of Delhi for further future development:

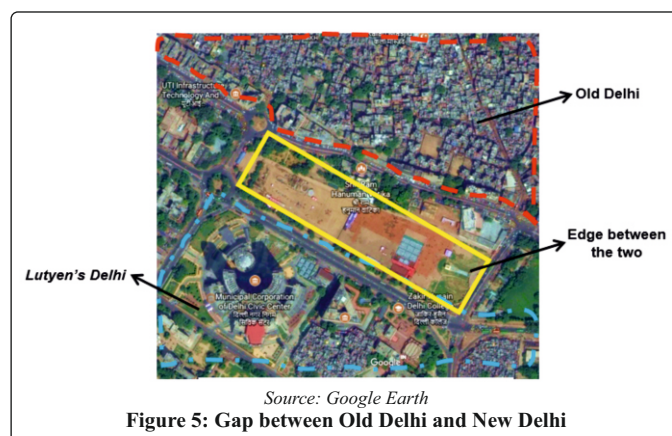


Figure 5: Gap between Old Delhi and New Delhi

1. **Connections:** New networks must be emerged from both Old and New Delhi so that smaller connections give opportunities to the people to connect to each other.
2. **Opportunities:** must be created for the users in both old and planned Delhi by building a market or a pause point.
3. **Physical infrastructure:** As old Delhi built fabric is very fine so amount of footfall of visitors and people is very high so adequate infrastructure like parking, services, public utilities must be built up for people to access like in New Delhi.
4. Emphasize more on **pedestrianization and open spaces** so that a platform is built up for different user group of people to interact.
5. Sometimes not by building or constructing the city, solution lies on building the urban controls for an area by increasing the FAR to maintain the built open ratio.
6. **Protecting Heritage:** Heritage buildings must be protected by the urban conservation tool like renovation, urban renewal of those building which are in danger to get extinct, as they are the reflection of our past.

The solution lies in the fact that planning must be such as to accommodate the lower class group with higher class communities considering interdependence on each other so that the integrated society could function hand in hand. Designers must also focus on Live, Work, and Play scheme for both lower group and higher group of people where everyone can have access to the social and physical

infrastructure, which could improve the socio economic pattern and living conditions of city. He must strengthen the existing pattern instead of starting from a piece of vacant land. At the end I would say that restructuring is not only a one word vision of creating a new city but changing the overall picture of an existing city so that the coming generation may have better living environment and opportunities to grow.

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